



**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**  
**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL TREASURER**

---

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AND  
QUALIFICATIONS TO PROVIDE  
Digital Board Book Creation & Editing Portals**

**The Office of the General Treasurer in Conjunction with  
The State Investment Commission & The Employees Retirement System of  
Rhode Island  
50 Service Avenue  
Warwick, RI 02886**

**RFP Issued July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

**Proposals Due July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **SECTION I: Page 3**

#### **General Information**

Introduction

Background

### **SECTION II: Page 4**

#### **Purpose of Request for Proposal**

Purpose of Request for Proposal

Issuing Officer, Contacts and Lobbying

Period of Contract

### **SECTION III: Page 5**

#### **Scope, Qualifications and Information Requested**

Scope of Work

Minimum Qualifications

Information Requested

### **SECTION IV: Page 9**

#### **Proposed Fee**

Proposed Fee

Negotiate Fees and Best and Final Offers (BAFO)

### **SECTION V: Page 9**

#### **Selection Process**

Schedule

Questions

Proposal Submission and Format

Evaluation of Responses

Other Considerations and Restrictions

## **SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Office of the General Treasurer (“Treasurer”), in conjunction with the ten-member State Investment Commission (“SIC”), chaired by the General Treasurer, determines the State’s investment policies. The SIC oversees about \$7.6 billion in assets for the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island as well as investments in the TIAA defined contribution plan, a 401 (a) program, and CollegeBoundSaver. It also sets policies for investments of the Other Post-Employment Benefits trust and the State’s 457 plans as well as the assets of the Program. The SIC meets monthly and receives investment performance reports from Treasury staff and consultants.

The Employees Retirement System of Rhode Island’s (“ERSRI”) fifteen-member Retirement Board is also chaired by the Treasurer. The Retirement Board oversees ERSRI and the group of state retirement plans that fall under its management. ERSRI is the state’s largest public employee retirement system. The \$7.6 billion retirement system handles pension issues for state employees, teachers, the Municipal Employees’ Retirement System (MERS), MERS police and fire, correctional officers, BHDDH nurses, state police and judges.

Under the directives set by the SIC, Treasury’s Investment and Finance Division (“Division”) provides investment, cash and debt management services for the State of Rhode Island. The Division’s staff interfaces daily with custodians, consultants, and fund managers on asset allocation, investment and administrative matters, as well as managing and transferring State funds.

At each monthly meeting of the SIC, Division staff produces a series of books and other necessary materials. These items are created by utilizing information provided by custodians and consultants. Material subjects consist of, but are not limited to: investment performance, assets under management and fund analysis. A significant amount of staff time is dedicated to the preparation of these various materials, and reliance on multiple sources lengthens the process.

Similarly, ERSRI staff compiles relevant materials in advance of the monthly meeting of the Retirement Board. In addition to the main Board, there are a number of subcommittees that are active under the Retirement Board: the Audit Subcommittee, Board Training Subcommittee, Disability Subcommittee, Elections Subcommittee, Legislative Subcommittee, Procurement Subcommittee, Rules & Regulations Subcommittee.

Treasury is seeking a qualified firm to provide an internet-based portal for authorized Division and ERSRI staff to utilize for meeting preparation. Staff will upload required materials through the secure portal to then design final books and presentations. Following implementation of the online portal, Board members will be able to review materials through standard web browsers or iOS / Android applications. A total of 50 individuals, including members of both Boards, executive and general staff and outside users will require access and unique log-in credentials.

## **SECTION II: PURPOSE OF RFP**

### **PURPOSE OF RFP**

The Treasurer is soliciting responses from qualified firms to serve as a service provider for a Digital Board Book Creation and Editing Portal. This platform will be utilized by both the SIC and the ERSRI Retirement Board members, as well as select staff. Potential program managers are encouraged to demonstrate their platform management capabilities as well as their firm's customer service and troubleshooting experience.

### **ISSUING OFFICER, CONTACTS AND LOBBYING**

The Treasurer, in conjunction with the State Investment Commission and the Employees Retirement System of Rhode Island, is issuing this RFP. The Issuing Officer identified below is the sole point of contact regarding this RFP. No contacts with any other employee of the Office of the General Treasurer, members of the SIC board, members of the ERSRI Retirement Board or state officials are permitted with respect to this RFP, any proposals submitted in response to the RFP, or the contract to be awarded pursuant to this RFP. This prohibition applies from the date of release of this RFP until the date a contract is executed, unless otherwise requested by the Issuing Officer. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, any lobbying efforts directed at state legislators or any state officer or employee who might reasonably be considered to have influence over the process and final outcome.

The Issuing Officer for this RFP is:

Patrick Marr  
Chief of Staff  
Rhode Island Office of the General Treasurer  
50 Service Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Warwick, RI 02886  
(401) 462-7664  
Pmarr@treasury.ri.gov

Transmittal letters for any proposal submitted in response to this RFP should designate one person employed by the party responding to this RFP ("Respondent"), who is authorized to contact the Issuing Officer on behalf of the Respondent. Unless otherwise requested by the Issuing Officer, from the date of issuance of this RFP until the date a contract is executed, only such authorized contact person should contact the Issuing Officer with respect to this RFP, any proposal submitted in response to the RFP or the contract to be awarded under the RFP on behalf of the Respondent. Without limiting the foregoing one-contact provision, persons who are not employees of the Respondent shall not contact the Issuing Officer on behalf of the Respondent with respect to this RFP, any proposal submitted in response to the RFP or the contract to be awarded under this RFP unless requested to do so by the Issuing Officer.

Violations of this one-contact provision may result in immediate disqualification from this and any future business opportunities with the Treasurer and/or the SIC.

### **PERIOD OF CONTRACT**

The term of this contract shall be for a period of three (3) years.

## **SECTION III: SCOPE OF WORK**

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

Scope of Work required by a Service Provider, includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Legal and Regulatory Compliance
- B. Portal Administration and Recordkeeping Services
- C. Portal Installation and Ongoing Maintenance
- D. User Training
- E. Customer Service

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

In order to be considered for selection, the following minimum qualifications must be met:

1. The Respondent has a minimum of five (5) years of experience with Digital Board Book plans or programs that require the same or similar services to those described in the Scope of Services set forth in this RFP.
2. The Respondent has detailed information security processes in place. This includes data encryption ability and other related features to secure materials both online and offline.
3. Once selected, the Respondent will be qualified with the Secretary of State to conduct business in the State of Rhode Island and the qualification must be kept current throughout the term of the Agreement.
4. The Respondent must have a robust customer service operation in place. This includes (but is not limited to) 24 hour dial-in assistance and custom tutorials provided to new users.
5. Once selected, the Respondent will maintain sufficient procedures and capabilities to ensure the timely and accurate backup and full recovery for all data storage systems related to the Rhode Island account.
6. The Respondent has a company policy and practice of equal opportunity and non-discrimination based on race, creed or gender.

The Respondent has a continuing obligation to disclose information throughout the RFP process should any qualifications or situations change that might render the Respondent an unqualified candidate.

## INFORMATION REQUESTED

### **Organization and History**

1. Provide the name, title, address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the individual responsible for responding to this request.
2. Please describe your organization providing comment on the following:
  - a. Business background, organizational history (including year founded) and ownership structure.
  - b. An overview of your organization and list all major business lines.
  - c. What percent of revenue is derived from public entities?
  - d. What percent of revenue is derived from non-profit and corporate entities?
  - e. Is your firm Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)/ Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certified? Please identify the percentage of MBE/WBE employed.
3. Provide an organizational chart of your online board portal program management. Indicate the number of employees you have in each functional area of your program management operations and the location in which program management services are provided.
4. How many years has your company offered online board portal program management, or other digital governance tools?
5. Detail the public plans in which you currently provide online board program management, or other digital governance tools, including the program name, length of contract, number of account owners and current assets.

State/Municipality	Program Name	Length of Contract	Number of Authorized Users

6. Disclose any termination for cause from any online board portal management contract in the past three years. Cite background of the contract, reason for termination, and remedies the respondent has employed to preclude similar circumstances from reoccurring.
7. Provide a list of any subcontractors that your firm plans to utilize in performing the services required. Indicate the contractual relationship and/or affiliation with the subcontractor(s). Detail the services to be provided by subcontractor(s) and how your firm monitors those services. Do you require licenses or insurance of your subcontractors?
8. Provide three references in which your firm provides similar services as requested in this RFP. Include entity name, contact name, phone number and email address. Provide a short description of the services you provide and the length of the contract.

9. Detail any potential conflicts of interest you foresee by providing the services outlined in this RFP. Please identify the actions that would be taken to avoid any conflict(s) of interest.

### **Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

1. Discuss your experience with providing legal and regulatory compliance support to online board portal clients. Specifically address the development of program description and amendments.
2. Discuss how your firm would update the Office of the General Treasurer with regards to legal and regulatory compliance matters as it relates to the 529 industry.
3. Describe the types of insurance coverage your firm maintains as it relates to the online board portal services you offer (e.g. Cyber liability/and or data security insurance, etc.). Provide the names of carriers and the amounts of the coverage. Attach current certificates of insurance in effect.

### **Program Administration and Document Services**

1. How long has the current online portal system been deployed?
2. When was the last major update to the system and what were the key enhancements made?
3. Is your firm going through any system conversions or major changes now or in the next three years related to this product offering? If so, please describe and give the schedule. What effect will this have on the platform?
4. Describe your standard book template and document capabilities. Provide samples. What is the transmittal method? Do you have the capability to deliver books and other documents in a variety of file formats (Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, etc.)?
5. Describe the real-time reporting/viewing capabilities of your online system.
6. Discuss your security testing. When were the most recent tests done?
7. Describe your firm's policies and procedures regarding data encryption, cyber security and other measures to prevent unauthorized access or fraud.
8. Describe your firm's ability and plan to comply with state open meetings laws. What is your firm's ability to maintain up-to-date knowledge of these laws?
9. Describe the process for segregating public material and board-only material within your online portal system.
10. Describe how your system manages and records board votes.
11. Describe the annotation and other "note-taking" capabilities of your portal. Can individual members create and save notes on board materials through your system? How will these annotations be preserved?

12. Describe the ability of your system to import content from a variety of sources: PowerPoint files, PDF, Word Documents, Excel Spreadsheets, etc.
13. Describe the ability of your system to export content to a variety of formats: PowerPoint files, PDF, Word Documents, Excel Spreadsheets, etc.

### **Customer Service and Implementation**

1. Discuss which personnel will be assigned to the Program with respect to client service and day-to-day interaction with the Office of the General Treasurer. Please provide a brief bio for each individual.
2. Describe your willingness to attend meetings with the Office of the General Treasurer, the SIC and the Retirement Board to provide updates on the Program.
3. Discuss how your firm would involve and coordinate with the Office of the General Treasurer in customer service-related matters.
4. Describe your online board portal customer service expertise.
5. Outline your firm's process for responding to issues and inquiries made by board members.
6. How do you monitor customer satisfaction, including with the Office of the General Treasurer and individual board members?
7. Provide a detailed task list and schedule on how you will approach the initial implementation process, including actions required on the part of the Office of the General Treasurer and the time-frame to complete each task. Clearly describe the process: who is responsible for coordinating activities, who must participate, what activities must occur? Detail the type and amount of resources required from the Office of the General Treasurer, if any. Please assume a live date of ....
8. What dedicated resources (personnel, training, etc.), procedures, and controls will you provide or recommend for future training needs? Will additional training be provided when board members or executive staff turnover?
9. Describe the process for implementing the use of new hardware or other technology. Can your system be installed on members' existing devices?
10. What is the process for handling ongoing maintenance and software upgrades for devices and-or your system? Describe how your firm will overcome these issues and maintain service and functionality throughout.



## SECTION IV: PROPOSED FEE

### PROPOSED FEE

Please provide all fee details in a separate email from the rest of your RFP response. This will be reviewed separately as part of the final evaluation.

1. Detail all fees associated with your proposal, including the expenses outlined below:
  - A. Annual License Fee
  - B. Setup Fee
  - C. Training Fee
  - D. Additional Training(s) Fee
  - E. Customization Fee
2. Detail any other fees (beyond those described in the previous question) that your firm plans to collect as a result of the Program.
3. How do you ensure each fee component of the Program remains competitive?

### NEGOTIATE FEES AND BEST AND FINAL OFFERS (BAFO)

Fees are a material element in awarding the contract pursuant to this RFP. The Treasurer and/or his agents reserve the right to negotiate fees and request best and final offers. Fees, however, are only one of several factors used to evaluate proposals and the Treasurer and/or SIC may rely on factors other than the lowest level of fees in awarding the contract pursuant to this RFP.

## SECTION V: Selection Process

### SCHEDULE

RFP Issued	July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2016
Deadline for proposers to submit questions	July 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
Response to questions	July 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2016
<b><i>RFP Responses due</i></b>	<b>July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>
Evaluation Period	July 28 <sup>th</sup> to August 9 <sup>th</sup> *
Service provider selection	August 10 <sup>th</sup>
Contract negotiations and drafting	August 11 <sup>th</sup> to September 2 <sup>nd</sup> *
Program launch	October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2016

\*dates are tentative and subject to change

### Respondents' Questions

If Respondents have any questions, they should submit their questions using the online portal at <http://treasury.ri.gov/rfp-calendar/rfps/request-for-proposals-and-qualifications-to-provide-digital-board-book-creation-editing-portals> no later than 4:00 P.M. Eastern on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2016. All questions will be aggregated and posted publically on the RFP section of [www.treasury.ri.gov](http://www.treasury.ri.gov). Treasury staff will not answer questions verbally or individually during the RFP process.

## **Proposal Submission**

Respondents should submit two (2) electronic copies: (1) in PDF format and (1) MS Word format to the online portal at <http://treasury.ri.gov/rfp-calendar/rfps/request-for-proposals-and-qualifications-to-provide-digital-board-book-creation-editing-portals> no later than 4:00 P.M. Eastern on July 27<sup>th</sup> 2016. Please submit fee information in a completely separate file labeled clearly as “(Firm Name’s) Fee Proposal.” Proposals received after that deadline will not be considered. Telephoned or faxed submissions will not be considered. If you have any IT issues please contact Chris Cate at 401-462-7659.

## **PROPOSAL FORMAT**

Proposals should be prepared in a concise manner, delineating the respondent’s capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. In order to expedite the evaluation of proposals, it is essential that Respondents follow the format and instructions contained herein. Proposals must include substantial evidence of the Respondent’s commitment and ability to undertake the services required and outlined in this RFP.

The Treasurer and/or SIC reserves the right to request and consider supplements to proposals or to particular proposals after the deadline for initial proposals, until such time as a contract with a particular Respondent is finalized.

## **EVALUATION OF RESPONSES**

The Program Manager will be selected based upon an assessment of the Respondent’s ability to provide the services as described above and the Respondent’s proposal. The selection process will consider the relevant experience of the respondent, the strength of the proposal, the demonstrated ability and willingness of the Respondent to structure the best possible delivery of services, and the cost of the proposed services.

During the evaluation process the Treasurer and/or the SIC staff reserve the right to request additional information or clarification from those submitting responses. Respondents may be asked to participate in a telephonic interview, an in-person interview in Rhode Island or an on-site visit at the Respondent’s place of business.

The RFP does not commit the Treasurer and/or the SIC to make any selection or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of the responses or attendance at interviews and the Treasurer and/or SIC in their sole discretion, reserve the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this RFP, to waive any nonconformity with the provisions hereof, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel this RFP, in part or in its entirety. All proposals shall become the property of the Treasurer and/or SIC and shall be subject to public records request under Rhode Island General Laws § 38-2-1 et seq. (Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act, hereinafter “APRA”).

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The criteria for evaluation and weight assigned to each are summarized below.

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>A. Organizational Characteristics</b>           | <b>40 points</b> |
| 1. Organizational Structure                        |                  |
| 2. Online Portal and Digital Governance Experience |                  |
| 3. Service Team                                    |                  |
| 4. Legal and Regulatory Compliance Support         |                  |

**B. Program Administration and Document Services** **40 points**

1. Experience
3. Security Capabilities
4. Usage Measurement Capabilities
5. User Ease-of-Use
6. Training Programs
7. General Customer Service
8. Implementation Plan

**C. Fees** **20 points**

1. Overall Cost

**Other Considerations and Restrictions**

*Restrictions on Gifts*

State ethics laws restrict gifts which may be given or received by employees and directors and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with State government. Respondents are responsible to determine the applicability of these laws to their activities and to comply with the requirements. In addition, it is a felony offense to bribe or attempt to bribe a public official.

*Non-Discrimination*

All proposals shall be considered on the basis of their merit in accordance with the criteria specified herein and shall not exclude any person, firm, or other entity, from consideration on the grounds of sex, race, color, or national origin. Likewise, it is required that all Respondents have established non-discrimination policies, including policies, which prohibit discrimination in the selection of subcontractors. Respondents shall represent and warrant in their responses to this RFP that they do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin, including but not limited to their selection of subcontractors.

*State Code of Ethics*

The State of Rhode Island and Treasurer are committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethics in the awarding of contracts. In accordance therewith, all Respondent's should be familiar with and abide by the State Code of Ethics, as set forth in Rhode Island General Laws §36-14-1 *et. seq.*, and any additional regulations as provided on the State Ethics Commission website <http://www.ethics.ri.gov/code/>.

*Confidentiality Requirements*

The staff members that are assigned by the successful Respondent to this Program – be they employees of the Respondent, sub-contractors to the Respondent, or employees of sub-contractors – may be required to sign a non-disclosure statement.

The Treasurer and/or SIC shall treat all documents submitted by a Respondent in connection with this RFP as public records after awarding the contract pursuant to this RFP, unless the Respondent properly requests that documents submitted by it be treated as non-public at the time of submission. The release of public records is governed by Rhode Island General Laws §38-2-1 *et seq.* (“APRA”). Respondents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this law before submitting a proposal.

Any request by Respondents that records submitted by them be exempt from being considered public record must be included in the transmittal letter with the Respondents' proposal. In addition, Respondents must enumerate the specific grounds upon which the APRA or other applicable law supports treatment of the documents as exempt from being considered a public record, and further, the factual basis, if any,

upon which they rely in asserting that the documents should be exempt. Any request for treating records submitted as being exempt must also include: the name, address, and telephone number of the person authorized by the Respondent to respond to any inquiries by the Treasurer and/or SIC with regard to such an assertion.

Any proposals submitted which contain non-public records must be conspicuously marked on the outside as containing non-public information, and each page upon which non-public information appears must be conspicuously marked as containing non-public information. Identification of the entire proposal as being non-public records may be deemed non-responsive and may disqualify the Respondent.

If the Respondent designates any portion of the proposal as being a non-public record, the Respondent must submit one (1) copy of the proposal from which the non-public record is deleted or redacted. This copy shall be submitted in addition to the number of copies requested in Section V of this RFP. The non-public records must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the information redacted and retain as much of the proposal as possible.

The Treasurer and/or SIC will treat the records marked as non-public as being confidential information to the extent such information is determined confidential under the APRA or other applicable law or by a court of competent jurisdiction. The Respondent's failure to request records submitted as being non-public records will be deemed as a waiver of any right to confidentiality, which the Respondent may have had.

By submitting a proposal, Respondent agrees that the Treasurer and/or SIC may reproduce Respondent's proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal or to respond to requests for public records. Respondent consents to such reproduction by submitting a proposal and further warrants that such reproduction does not violate its rights or the rights of any third parties. The Treasurer and/or SIC shall have the right to use ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in proposals.

#### *Placement Agent Disclosure Certificate*

It is the Treasurer's policy to prohibit the use of placement agents with respect to work performed for the Treasurer and/or SIC, and to require disclosure regarding vendors use of placement agents in other aspects of their business.

#### *Code of Conduct Investor Pledge*

The Treasurer has a strict policy with regard to political contributions and the adherence to the rules and laws drafted by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), including the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 CFR Part 275, Rule 206(4)-5 and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB), including Rule G-37. The successful Respondent will be required to comply with said policy and to complete and sign an appropriate disclosure statement.

#### *Transparency in Government Agreement*

The Treasurer and the SIC recently adopted policies addressing transparency in government. The transparency in government agreement can be found at <http://investments.treasury.ri.gov/investment-philosophy/>.

The placement agent disclosure certificate, the code of conduct investor pledge can be referenced at: <http://data.treasury.ri.gov/dataset/investment-manager-and-consultant-policies-and-pledges>.

All forms will be required to be signed upon engagement, where applicable.